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2003 DEC 11 A 11: 22

December 10, 2003

FTA Docket No. FTA-2003-16467 - 2

Department of Transportation
Central Dockets Office, PI-401,
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20590

I am writing in reference to a notice for request to extend currently approved information collection for the 5310 Elderly and Persons with Disability program, Docket No. FTA-2003-16467 .

I understand that this is a request to extend previously approved information collection but I want to take this opportunity encourage you to consider collecting information about the urban and rural distribution of funds at the state level. Our research has shown that the lack of transportation in rural communities is consistently rated as one of the most significant problems reported by people with disabilities who live in rural communities and those who serve them. In many rural communities, 5310 may be the only transit program. Yet, while we can easily track the allocation of funds from 5311 to rural areas, there is no clear mechanism for tracking the allocation for 5310 funds to rural areas. Given the central role this program may have to rural communities, it would be immensely helpful to know the extent to which it provides this needed support.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please, feel free to contact me at 406 243 2654.

Sincerely,

Tom Seekins, Ph.D.
Director, RTC:Rural